

could. Dr. Shennum is one of the rare program managers who can be counted on to provide factual answers when asked a question. He does not give evasive responses, however convenient they may sometimes be for his company or the Pentagon. His straightforward approach with the Pentagon, Congress, and within his industry team has been instrumental in the Airborne Laser's outstanding program performance. I wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

The Booen-Shennum team has succeeded because both of these men understand what the word "leadership" means. They know it involves fixing on an objective, setting high, but realistic, standards, and leading the government and industry components of the Airborne Laser team effectively to that objective. They have refused to accept excuses for work that hasn't met their standards. They have inspired their colleagues to accomplish more than many thought possible. They appreciate effort, but expect results.

And it is results, unparalleled in any other defense program, that Mike Booen and Paul Shennum have given us.

Colonel Booen and Dr. Shennum have demonstrated how a government-industry team should act. This program is not a team in name only, thanks to the constant efforts of Colonel Booen and Dr. Shennum. They have caused the team members, including the various defense contractors, industry and government employees to really work together to achieve a common goal.

In their relentless pursuit of excellence, Col. Mike Booen and Dr. Paul Shennum have reminded us that America's defense programs will ultimately succeed or fail because of the people involved. I congratulate them and thank them for doing such a great job.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MILLENNIUM DIGITAL COMMERCE ACT

Mr. THOMPSON. I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House to accompany S. 761.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. THOMPSON. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate disagree to the amendments of the House, agree to the request for a conference with the

House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. REID. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

#### MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2285

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2285 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2285) instituting a Federal fuels tax holiday.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

#### ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it adjourn until the hour of 12 noon on Monday, March 27, 2000. I further ask consent that on Monday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate begin a period of morning business until 1:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the exception for the following: the first 45 minutes under the control of Senator DURBIN, or his designee; the second 45 minutes under the control of Senator THOMAS, or his designee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PROGRAM

Mr. THOMPSON. For the information of all Senators, following the morning business period at 1:30 on Monday, the Senate will begin consideration of S.J. Res. 14 regarding the desecration of the flag. Under the agreement reached earlier, two amendments will be debated during Monday's session of the Senate.

As announced, no rollcall votes will occur on Monday, and therefore the votes in relation to those amendments are scheduled for 2:15 on Tuesday. Any Senators interested in debating this important measure should be prepared to do so on Monday or early Tuesday.

Again, the next scheduled rollcall vote will occur beginning at 2:15 on Tuesday.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, prior to leaving the floor, I hope the leader gets

the message that we have a lot of work to do. There was a dialog that went on in the Chamber today talking about the many things that need to be done. Minimum wage was talked about at some length. I also remind the majority that there are other things we need to get to work on. We are not doing anything related to education. We have health care delivery problems that need to be addressed, including Patients' Bill of Rights, prescription drugs for seniors, and Medicare.

There are other things that may not sound as important but are just as important. I met again today with some high-tech people. I know the Senator from Tennessee has spent some time on the Export Administration Act. I hope the majority will allow us to move forward on that legislation. It is extremely important to the high-tech industry, which is the flagship that is now driving this economy.

The minority is ready to work day and night on all these issues. The reason I am so concerned is I have worked since my time in the Senate with Senator BYRD. He has been whip, he has been majority leader, minority leader, chairman as well as ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, and many other positions, but I have worked with him my entire 14 years in the Senate on the Appropriations Committee. I know how long it takes to work the appropriations process. We have 13 appropriations bills we must move, and it must be done before October 1.

We don't have a budget yet. We have 13 subcommittees with the appropriators waiting to move their bills. We cannot do it until we get a budget. I don't think we are at a point of desperation yet, but there is a lot of work to do and not much time to do it. I hope the majority allows the Senate to move forward on all these important things as quickly as possible.

#### TRIBUTE TO RICHARD BEST—AN AMERICAN HERO

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, Tom Brokaw's recently released a best-selling book, "The Greatest Generation" is a tribute to the contributions of the millions of Americans who grew up during the Great Depression, then went on to fight and win WWII.

I suggest that most Americans will agree that Mr. Brokaw's father's generation is one of unique and lasting significance.

Having lived through that dark hour when totalitarian regimes in Europe and Asia threatened the survival of our republic, and having witnessed the sacrifices unhesitatingly borne by our servicemen, I must confess that I, like most of that generation, can never take our liberties for granted.

More than a half-century removed from victory in WWII, in retrospect I

am convinced that far too many Americans have forgotten (or perhaps never learned) how bleak the prospects for our success appeared to be in the spring and early summer of 1942.

Victory was not preordained, and our fate might well have been vastly different had it not been for the heroic actions of U.S. Navy Lieutenant Richard Best and others like him who won that decisive victory at the Battle of Midway in June 1942, reversing a decade of previously unchecked (and largely unchallenged aggression) by the Japanese Imperial Navy.

Mr. President, to understand fully the heroic nature of Lieutenant Best's heroism, it is essential to understand the events leading up to the battle. Prior to Midway, American forces in the Pacific had endured a devastating series of losses and withdrawals that had crippled the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Beginning with almost 3,600 casualties at Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Americans witnessed the fall of Hong Kong, Singapore, and Rangoon to battle-hardened Japanese forces; the collapse of a spirited defense of Battan by American and Filipino forces; and finally, the devastating loss of Corregidor, the island at the entrance of Manila Bay—an island that the United States had heavily fortified and which had been dubbed the "Gibraltar of the East."

These losses led many Americans to the conclusion that Japan's success in the Pacific was inevitable. Some voices at home began to call for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Pacific theater so that we could first concentrate on winning the war against fascism in Europe.

After the selfless and courageous action of Lieutenant Best on June 4, 1942, and the American victory at the Battle of Midway, it became clear that America would not abandon the Pacific theater to an unprovoked aggressor. Instead, America would stand and fight.

Mr. President, the Japanese plan of attack on Midway was designed as part of the largest operation in the history of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Anticipating complete surprise and equipped with four fast carriers, *Kaga*, *Akagi*, *Soryu*, and *Hiryu*, the First Carrier Striking Force had reason to expect a crushing victory. The early action of the battle seemed to justify that confidence.

The first action saw three successive waves of American torpedo bombers attack the Japanese carriers. While avoiding damage to their carriers, Japanese fighters and anti-aircraft guns quickly managed to shoot down 35 of the 41 American aircraft.

Following these devastating losses, two squadrons of United States dive bombers from the U.S.S. *Enterprise* swooped down on the Japanese carriers. Leading the *Enterprise's* Bombing Squadron Six, a group of 15 Dauntless

SBD aircraft was their commanding officer, Lieutenant Richard Best (later lieutenant commander).

Regarded as one of the Navy's most skilled dive-bomb pilots, Lieutenant Best took the point attacking the well-defended Japanese flagship, the *Akagi*. With precision, he delivered his bomb on the flight deck of the powerful carrier, scoring the first direct hit, one that would eventually lead to the sinking of the ship.

Of the 15 planes in his squadron, only Lieutenant Best and four others returned to the *Enterprise* that day. After refueling and rearming, Lieutenant Best soared into the air again. This time he was searching for the *Hiryu*, the one Japanese carrier that had managed to survive the day's earlier fighting.

According to the Naval Historical Center, Richard Best scored a second direct hit against the *Hiryu*, helping to deliver a devastating blow to the overconfident and seemingly invincible Japanese Navy.

In addition to being the only American pilot to score two successful direct hits on Japanese carriers at the Battle of Midway, there was something else remarkable about Lieutenant Best's courage that day. At the time of the attack, he was physically weakened and suffering from severe lung damage. Doctors later diagnosed him as suffering from tuberculosis, a condition that would (1) prevent him from ever flying again and (2) would cause him to spend the next two years recovering in Navy hospitals.

For his actions at Midway, Lieutenant Commander Best received the Navy Cross in 1942, the second highest military award presented to members of the Naval Service. It now appears that this award was based on incomplete information and that at the time, the Navy was not aware (1) that Best was the only pilot who scored two direct hits and (2) that he was suffering from tuberculosis.

Since then, a number of distinguished retired Naval officers, including Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, have "weighed-in" in support of awarding Dick Best the Congressional Medal of Honor. Should the Department of the Navy and the Department of Defense determine that an upgrade of the Navy Cross is appropriate I will unhesitatingly support it.

Mr. President, tomorrow night, at a dinner in New York City, the International Midway Memorial Foundation, will celebrate the 90th birthday of Dick Best and honor him for his selfless and courageous conduct in the Battle of Midway. While I am unable to be present, I certainly extend my gratitude and respect for his incredible heroism that day.

#### HONORING THE DEDICATION OF RICE-TOTTEN STADIUM, MS VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the importance of this weekend in my home State of Mississippi. On March 25th, Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) will rededicate and rename its football complex. Formerly known as Magnolia Stadium, the Rice-Totten Stadium will honor two of MVSU's great athletes and two ambassadors for the Itta Bena school.

Jerry Rice is a legend—not only in Mississippi, but throughout the world. After completing an extraordinary career at Valley, Jerry went on to become the greatest professional wide receiver ever. During his time with the San Francisco 49ers, Jerry dazzled fans with his ability to make the impossible look easy, broke numerous NFL reception records, and led his team to multiple Super Bowl Championships.

Willie Totten is one of collegiate athletics's greatest competitors. From 1983–1986 Willie led Valley to the top of Division I-AA football. He also raised the bar by which all college offenses are now judged. Today, almost every college football team utilizes a strong pass-oriented offense game plan, but that hasn't always been the case. Football fans have Willie to thank for showing us how exciting passing over 50 times a game can be. Following a solid career with the Buffalo Bills, Willie served the future of competitive athletics as a college and high school coach.

I believe it's only fitting that MVSU recognize and honor Jerry Rice and Willie Totten for their accomplishments and achievements by naming Magnolia Stadium after them. Although I will not be able to attend the rededication ceremony, I wish MVSU, Jerry Rice, Willie Totten, their families, and those associated with the University they celebrate this occasion.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 22, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,727,734,275,348.06 (Five trillion, seven hundred twenty-seven billion, seven hundred thirty-four million, two hundred seventy-five thousand, three hundred forty-eight dollars and six cents).

One year ago, March 22, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,642,227,000,000 (Five trillion, six hundred forty-two billion, two hundred twenty-seven million).

Five years ago, March 22, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,844,513,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred forty-four billion, five hundred thirteen million).

Ten years ago, March 22, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,022,412,000,000 (Three trillion, twenty-two billion, four hundred twelve million).